



Deborah A. Gist
Commissioner

State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Shepard Building
255 Westminister Street
Providence, Rhode Island 02903-3400

Highly Qualified Teachers in Rhode Island Public Schools and Districts – FAQs

1. Which teachers need to meet Highly Qualified teacher requirements?

All teachers in Rhode Island public schools, including charter schools, who teach core content academic subjects must meet Highly Qualified requirements for their teaching assignments.

2. What are the core content academic subjects?

The No Child Left Behind Act, which established the requirements for Highly Qualified teachers, defines core content academic subjects as English/Language Arts, Mathematics, Reading, Science, Social Studies (Civics, Economics, Geography, History), Special Education, Visual and Performing Arts (Art, Dance, Music, Theatre), World Languages, and Writing.

3. What are the requirements to demonstrate Highly Qualified status?

The requirements to demonstrate Highly Qualified status are to hold at least a bachelor's degree, hold full state certification, and to demonstrate content mastery for each core content academic subject that is taught.

4. What Rhode Island certifications are considered full state certification?

The following Rhode Island certifications are considered full state certification: initial, professional, advanced, life professional, certificate of eligibility for employment, and alternate route preliminary certifications.

5. How can a teacher demonstrate content mastery for a core content academic subject?

Early Childhood and Elementary Education teachers can demonstrate content mastery by taking and passing all required certification tests for their certification areas. Special Education teachers and Middle, Secondary and All Grades content teachers can demonstrate content mastery either by taking and passing all required certification tests for their certification area or by having a content major or equivalent in their content area.

6. Which content tests and passing scores are required to demonstrate Highly Qualified status?

RIDE maintains a list of current approved certification tests and required passing scores which teachers must attain to meet the Highly Qualified content test requirement. The list of current approved tests and required scores can be viewed at the following link:

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/TeachersAdministrators/EducatorCertification.aspx>.

7. If a teacher took a previously approved certification test and attained the required passing score and RIDE subsequently approves a different test and/or passing score, does a teacher need to take and pass the newly approved certification tests to be considered Highly Qualified?

No. If a teacher took and passed a previously approved certification test or tests for their certification area and RIDE subsequently approves new tests and/or passing scores at a future date, the teacher does not need to meet the new test and score requirements. The teacher may present evidence of meeting the previously approved test requirements to demonstrate their Highly Qualified status.

8. How often does a teacher need to demonstrate Highly Qualified status in a core content academic subject?

A teacher only needs to demonstrate their Highly Qualified status in a core content academic subject once in their career for each core content academic subject they teach. Teachers who were previously designated as

Highly Qualified teachers in another state must present evidence of their Highly Qualified status to RIDE when they apply for Rhode Island certification.

9. Does RIDE accept certification tests from other states for the purposes of demonstrating Highly Qualified status?

No, RIDE only accepts the Rhode Island required tests and passing scores to demonstrate Highly Qualified status.

10. What is a HOUSSE rubric?

HOUSSE stands for High Objective Uniform State Standards of Evaluation. A HOUSSE rubric was a process that veteran teachers could use to demonstrate Highly Qualified status. This process required veteran teachers to accumulate a specified number of points across several categories including teaching experience, college courses, service as a mentor, and content awards. The Rhode Island Department of Education discontinued the HOUSSE rubric as a means to Highly Qualified status as of June 30, 2010.

11. Do Special Education teachers and English as a Second Language teachers need to be Highly Qualified?

Any teacher who is the teacher of record for a core content academic subject, including Special Education and English as a Second Language teachers, must meet Highly Qualified requirements for that subject. A Special Education teacher or English as a Second Language teacher who is not the teacher of record and serves in a resource, collaborative, or support capacity in a core content academic subject does not need to meet Highly Qualified requirements for that subject.

12. What constitutes Teacher of Record for the purposes of Highly Qualified teacher status?

The teacher of record is the teacher who is responsible for instruction and assigning grades.

13. How do new teachers, teachers new to Rhode Island, or veteran teachers adding new certification areas attain Highly Qualified teacher status?

New teachers, teachers new to Rhode Island, or veteran teachers adding new certification areas who meet all Highly Qualified requirements for a core content academic subject(s) are automatically designated as Highly Qualified teachers for that core content academic subject(s) during the certification process. The Highly Qualified teacher status for each core content academic subject is printed on the teaching certificate.

14. How do veteran Rhode Island teachers attain Highly Qualified status?

Veteran teachers who have not previously been designated as Highly Qualified teachers for a core academic subject(s) can be designated as a Highly Qualified teacher by presenting evidence of meeting all Highly Qualified teacher requirements for that core academic subject(s) to their school or school district. After verifying the evidence, schools or school districts update the teacher's Highly Qualified status in the eCert system.

15. Does the public have access to Highly Qualified information?

Yes, the public can access Highly Qualified information and teaching assignments through the eCert public access portal.